

## CANCER

I found her room at the top of the stairway.  
she was alone.  
"hello, Henry," she said, then,  
"you know, I hate this room, there's no window."

I had a terrible hangover.  
the smell was unbearable,  
I felt as if I were going to vomit.

"they operated on me two days ago," she said, "I felt better the next day but now it's the same, maybe worse."

"I'm sorry, mom."

"you know, you were right, your father is a horrible man."

poor woman. a brutal husband and an alcoholic son.

"excuse me, mom, I'll be right back ...."

the smell had seeped through me, my stomach was jumping.  
I got out of the chair and walked down the stairway, sat there halfway down, holding to the railing, breathing in the fresh air.

the poor woman.

I kept breathing in the air and managed not to vomit.

I got up and walked back up the stairway and into the room.

"he had me committed to a mental institution, did you know that?"

"yes, I informed them



that they had the wrong person  
in there."

"you look sick, Henry, are you all  
right?"

"I am sick today, mom, I'm going  
to come back and see you  
tomorrow."

"all right, Henry ...."

I got up, closed the door, then  
ran down the stairway.  
I got outside, to a rose  
garden.

I let it all go into the rose  
garden.

poor damned woman ....

the next day I arrived with  
flowers.  
I went up the stairway to the  
door.  
there was a wreath on the  
door.  
I tried the door anyhow.  
it was locked.

I walked down the stairway  
through the rose garden  
and out to the street  
where my car was  
parked.

there were two little girls  
about 6 or 7 years old  
walking home from school.

"pardon me, ladies, but would you  
like some flowers?"

they just stopped and stared at  
me.

"here," I gave the bouquet to the  
taller of the girls. "now, you  
divide these, please give your  
friend half of them."

"thank you," said the taller



girl, "they are very  
beautiful."

"yes, they are," said the other  
girl, "thank you very  
much."

they walked off down the street  
and I got into my car,  
it started, and  
I drove back to my  
place.

## MADMAN

being  
checked into a cell at L.A. City jail I  
was still a bit drunk  
there was a back-up of prisoners  
nobody noticed me smoking this cigarette  
until some ash dumped off the end  
then a cop screamed at me about how  
"they kept this fucking place CLEAN!"  
"oh," I said, and then the cop said,  
"wise fuckers, huh? ... o.k., now you  
get it!"  
and he pushed me into this room and  
locked the door behind  
me  
and here behind this yellow thick  
wire was this total  
madman  
he saw me and screamed  
ran full force toward me  
smashed into the wire  
bounced back  
rushed the wire again  
grabbing it  
shaking it  
wanting to get through it  
trying to get at me  
trying to kill me

it was fearful  
but I was drunk  
found another cigarette  
lit it  
pushed it through the wire  
expecting to get my hand ripped  
away  
he took the smoke